



British Parking Association Webinar

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February 2021

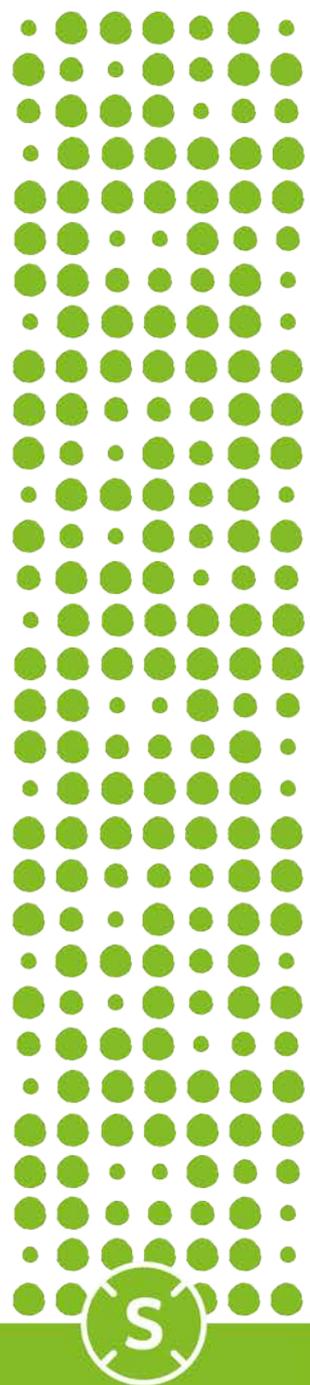
SAMARITANS





About Samaritans

- Started by Chad Varah in November 1953:
 - *In an emergency the citizen turns to the telephone and dials 999. There ought to be an emergency number for suicidal people, I thought. **Chad Varah, founder of Samaritans***
- Today there are over 20,000 volunteers from 201 branches across the UK and ROI
- **Our vision** is that fewer people die by suicide
- **Our message** is that suicide is not inevitable and can be prevented





Current context

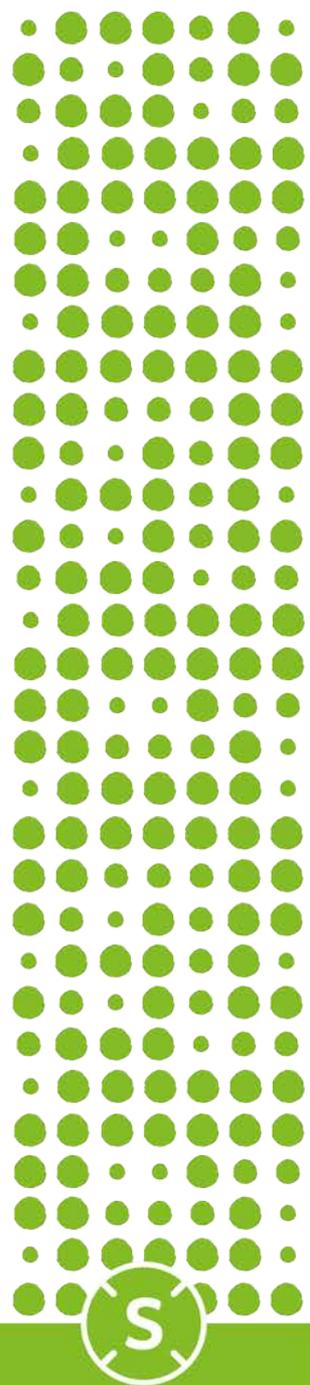
- Following a 12% reduction in suspected suicides between April 2015 and March 2017, we've seen a rise in the last 3 years
- There were 283 suicides or suspected suicides on the railway in 2019/20 (up from 271 in 18/19, and 252 in 17/18)
- Around 70% of those who take their life on the railway are men
- For every suicide that is attempted, approximately 20% of them do not end in death but can leave individuals with life changing injuries
- So far this year, we've seen 209 suspected suicides and 51 attempted suicides on the railway (1 April 2020 to 6 Feb 2021)
- Suicides on the railway make up 4% - 5% of all suicides in GB
- **For every life lost, six are saved through intervention.**





Impact of trauma

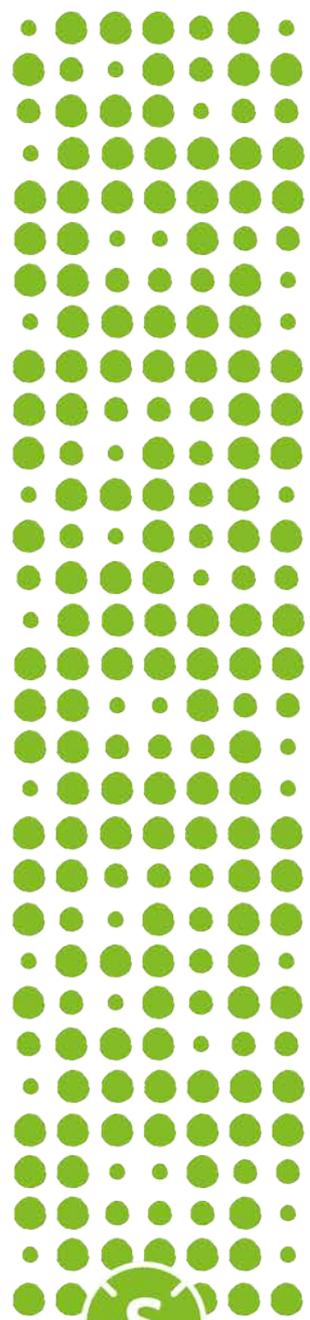
- Around a third of all suicides take place outside the home, in a public location of some kind
- They attract harmful media attention
- They can have significant psychological consequences for those who witness them or discover a body
- Impact on:
 - The driver. On average, a driver will have 30 days off work following an incident
 - Other rail staff are also affected
 - Passengers who witness the event can also be traumatised and as a result of their experience
 - Other people who may themselves be vulnerable to suicide could be prompted to consider this method as a means of taking their own life
 - Family, friends and local community





Rail industry aims

- To reduce **number of actual and attempted suicides** on the network
- To reduce **trauma** caused by suicide incidents to the industry's people and passengers
- To reduce **delay** caused by suicide



About the programme

- Network Rail signed a formal partnership with Samaritans in 2010 and co-founded the rail suicide prevention and support programme.
- We work with the whole rail industry, including train operators, police and unions.
- Current contract with Network Rail is running until March 2025



BRITISH
TRANSPORT
POLICE



What are we doing to prevent suicides and support those affected by them?

Campaigns

- Real People, Real Stories
 - Targeted at men aged 20-59, to encourage them to seek help
- Small Talk Saves Lives
 - Bystander campaign
- Brew Monday
 - Awareness raising campaign, encouraging people to get together over a cuppa during the cold months



What are we doing to prevent suicides and support those affected by them?

Training the rail industry

- Managing Suicidal Contacts
 - Identify and respond to a person in crisis
 - Employ techniques to start and maintain conversation(s)
 - Know where to go for further available support the person in crisis and support your own personal wellbeing
 - Demonstrate the knowledge and skills to safely intervene
- Trauma Support Training
 - Identify what trauma is
 - Understand why people react differently to traumatic events
 - Provide emotional first aid to colleagues
 - Consider individual coping strategies



What are we doing to prevent suicides and support those affected by them?

Outreach and multi-agency working

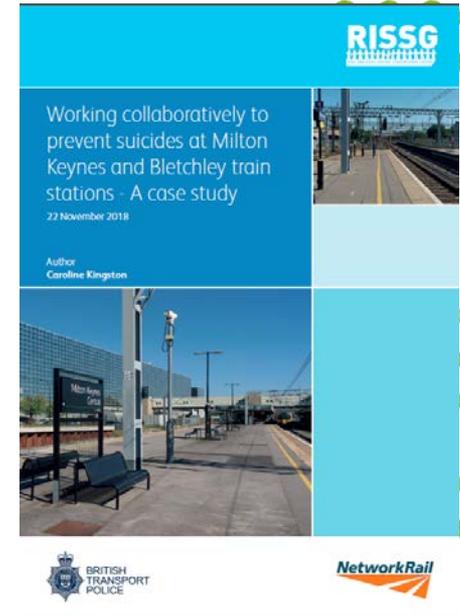
- Post incident support for staff and passengers
- Station and community events
- Multi-agency working in priority areas
 - Escalation Process – Rapid response to increase in activity
 - Community Outreach Locations – Response to areas of emerging risk and longer term priority areas



What are we doing to prevent suicides and support those affected by them?

Research and guidance

- Rail specific research with Middlesex university:
 - Why Do People Take their Life on the Railway in Great Britain
 - Suicide and Life-Saving Interventions on the Railways in Great Britain
- Rail specific guidance e.g. posters and signage
- Samaritans research and advice
 - Media guidelines and support service
- Best practice documents and case studies e.g. Working Collaboratively to Prevent Suicides in MK and B train stations



Supporting yourself and people you know

- **Samaritans website**
 - Signs you may be struggling to cope
 - Practical ways to help yourself cope
 - If you're worried about someone else

- **Samaritans Self-Help App**
 - Record your mood every day
 - Look for patterns in how you're feeling
 - Make your personal safety plan
 - Store images of things that give you hope

